

11. (New) A communication system comprising:

a video interface module outputting a video window containing information signals for video display to a user;

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a programmable box coupled to said video interface module through a video window link, said programmable box receiving at least one of a plurality of video source signals and also the video window output from said video interface module over the video window link, said programmable box generating video images based on at least one of the plurality of video source signals and the video window output from said video interface module; and

a video display for displaying video images generated by said programmable box, wherein the video window is displayed on said video display together with the generated video images based on the at least one of the plurality of video source signals received;

wherein said programmable box is programmed to pass to a computer remote control commands from a user that are designated for control of the computer.

12. (New) The communication system as recited in claim 11, wherein the computer is a personal computer housing said video interface module;

wherein said programmable box is an enhanced set top box, separated from and coupled to said personal computer through a data link and a video window link, said enhanced set top box receiving a plurality of video source signals from at least a broadcast video source; and

wherein said video display is a television (TV) screen for displaying TV images based on selected ones of the plurality of video source signals received and the video window output from the video interface module.

13. (New) The communication system as recited in claim 12, further comprising a TV set incorporating in its housing both said enhanced set top box and said video display, and wherein the plurality of video source signals include at least one of broadcast cable, digital broadcast satellite, video cassette recorder/player, and video disc player.

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14. (New) The communication system as recited in claim 11, further comprising:

a set top box for receiving a plurality of video source signals and relaying at least one selected video source signal to said programmable box;

wherein said programmable box is an enhanced services box housing said video interface module, said programmable box being separate from and connected to both said video display and said set top box.

15. (New) The communication system as recited in claim 11, wherein said video interface module is a video/telephone interface card comprising:

a data link interface receiving remote control commands passed by said programmable box over a data link;

a microprocessor processing the remote control commands received through said data link interface;

a telephone interface transferring telephony signals;

a video communications link interface transferring video information to said programmable box; and

an interface coupled to the computer.

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16. (New) The communication system as recited in claim 11, further comprising a remote control device outputting, in response to user actuation, the remote control commands passed by said programmable box for control of the computer.

17. (New) The communication system as recited in claim 11, further comprising a remote control device, in response to user actuation, outputting via a wireless transmission path the remote control commands passed by said programmable box for control of the computer.

18. (New) A method of using an integrated video system, the method comprising:

(a) receiving information signals, and outputting a video window containing the information signals;

(b) receiving a plurality of video source signals and the output video window;

(c) generating displayable images based on selected ones of the plurality of video source signals and the video window;

(d) displaying the displayable images generated in said generating step (c), wherein said displaying step (d) comprises the step of displaying the video window together with the displayable images based on the selected ones of the plurality of video source signals;

(e) receiving at least one of a plurality of remote control command signals, wherein the plurality of remote control command signals are used to interactively control operation of a set top box and a computer; and

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(f) passing to the computer received remote control commands that are designated for control of the computer.

19. (New) The method of using an integrated video system as recited in claim 18, wherein the information signals received in said receiving step (a) are information signals received from an external network;

wherein the plurality of video signals received in said receiving step (b) include video signals received from a broadcast video source;

wherein said generating step (c) includes generating displayable images in the form of television (TV) images based on selected ones of the plurality of video source signals and the video window; and

wherein said displaying step (d) includes displaying the generated TV images on a TV screen, wherein said displaying step (d) further includes making the video window appear on the TV screen as a pop-up window displayed on the TV screen together with the TV images based on the selected ones of the plurality of video source signals.

20. (New) The method of using an integrated video system as recited in claim 19, wherein the set top box is an enhanced set top box performing said passing step (f) so as to pass to a personal computer over a data link interface received remote control commands that are designated for control of the personal computer.

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21. (New) The method of using an integrated video system as recited in claim 20, the method further comprising incorporating the set top box in one of a TV and a video cassette recorder (VCR).

22. (New) The method of using an integrated video system as recited in claim 20, the method further comprising:

receiving personal computer remote control commands passed by the enhanced set top box;

processing the remote control commands received through the data link interface;

transferring telephony signals over a telephone interface; and

transferring video information over a video communications link interface to said enhanced set top box.

23. (New) The method of using an integrated video system as recited in claim 19, wherein the information signals received in said receiving step (a) are information signals received from an external network in the form of the Internet, and further include telephony signals.

24. (New) An article of manufacture for use in a communication system comprising:  
a computer outputting a video window containing information signals; an enhanced set top box, coupled to the computer through a data link and a video window link; and a video display for displaying video images generated by the enhanced set top box for display on the video display, the article of manufacture having stored thereon an executable program comprising:

(a) receiving a plurality of video source signals from at least one video source and the video window output from the computer over the video window link;

(b) generating video display images based on selected ones of the plurality of video source signals and the video window output from the computer, wherein the video window appears on the video display together with the video display images based on the selected ones of the plurality of video source signals;

(c) receiving at least one of a plurality of remote control command signals, the plurality of remote control command signals used to interactively control operation of the

enhanced set top box and the computer based on the video display images displayed on the video display; and

(d) passing to the computer over the data link the received remote control commands that are designated for control of the computer.

25. (New) The article of manufacture as recited in claim 24, wherein said generating step (b) further comprises digitally multiplexing pixels representing the video window and pixels representing a main digital video signal so as to generate video display images in the form of digital television (TV) signals.

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26. (New) The article of manufacture as recited in claim 25, wherein the video window appears as a pop-up window with the main digital video signal on the video display.

27. (New) The article of manufacture as recited in claim 24, having stored thereon an executable program further comprising detection of remote control commands in the form of voice activated commands to control both the enhanced set top box and the computer.

28. (New) The article of manufacture as recited in claim 24, wherein the computer is a personal computer (PC) outputting information signals in the form of text, graphics, and PC applications, and wherein said receiving step (a) receives the information signals output from the personal computer over the video window link.